

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Hi Horo 's Na Horo Eile

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Hi horo 's na horo eile,
Hi horo 's na horo eile,
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Gur tu mo luaidh ri m' bheo\ cha cheil me.

Nuair a bha mi 'm chaileig gho\raich
thug mi gaol is gra\dh do'n o\igfhear
aig am bheil a' phearsa bho\idheach,
's cha ghradhaich mi ri m' bheo\ fear eile.

Chaidh mi choill nan crann 's nan gallan,
chuir mi uigh am fiu\ran maiseach;
b' ann an Glasachu nam bu\ithnean
a thug mi ru\n do 'n diu\nnach fearail.

Miar as grinn' air peann a sgrì\obhas
's a chuir gleus air teudan fì\dhle,
's e do cheo\ a thogadh m' inntinn
nuair a bhithinn sgi\th fo smalan.

Do chu\ dualach, cuachach, bo\idheach,
falt do chinn mar it' an lo\n-duibh,
do dha ghruaidh air dhreach nan ro\san
's iad fo dhealta ceo\ na maidne.

Tha do chalpa cuimir, dìreach,
mar bhradan aibhne ruith gu fì\or-ghlan,
's gura fì\or gu 'n tug mi luaidh dhuit
measg na bheil de shluagh air thalamh.

Ach tha mis' an du\il 's an do\chas
gu 'n tig an la\ 'sam bi sinn co\mhladh;
's ma bhios tu-sa dì\leas dhomh-sa
cha ghradhaich mi ri m' bheo\ fear eile.

TRANSLATION

[number] refer to notes below on grammar etc.

chorus:

hi horo and some more horos (3 times)

You are my love and I'll never [0] deny it

When I was a green young girl [1]
I fell in love with the young man
who had [2] the handsome appearance;
and I will never love another [3].

I went into [4] the forest of trees and branches
and took an interest in a lovely sapling [5];
it is in Glasgow of the shops
that I fell in love with the manly handsome lad.

The most capable fingers that could write with a pen
or tune the strings of a violin;
it is your music that would lift [7] my spirits
when I was [7] weary and melancholy [6]
Your beautiful splendid curly locks,
the hair of your head is like the black-bird's feather;
your two cheeks are [8] the colour of roses
when the dew of the moring's mist is on them [9].

Your legs are strong and shapely [10]
like a salmon in a crystal clear stream [11];
and it's absolutely true that I've given my love to you
amongst all [12] the people that are in [13] the world.

But [14] I hope and expect [15]
that the day will come when [16] we will be together;
and if you are faithful to me
I shall love no other while I live.

[0] ri'm bheo\ = during my life

[1] 'm is a contraction of 'nam (ann an mo : in my).

Gaelic has "x is in its y" for english "x is a y"

[2] no verb "have" in gaelic. "x has y" is "x is at y"

so here we have "at whom is ..."

[3] fear eile = another one; it's just coincidence that
you could make sense by translating fear as "man" here,
it's not being used that way.

[4] the preposition "do" contracts to "a", and then "mi a"
suffers elision; the only remaining sign of the
preposition is the elision of coill' to choill'.

[5] these trees are all an extended metaphor; all three
words can mean a man as well as a tree. Coille (forest)
means the crowds of people in the city (like crowds of
trees in a forest).

[6] fo under has a sense something like "suffering from" in
many phrases; gaelic often uses fo + a noun where English
would use an adjective; as here, smalan = gloom hence
fo smalan = gloomy.

- [7] the incomplete tense is used here as habitual past.
- [8] "are" is inserted to conform to English grammar - Gaelic descriptive clauses are quite happy without a verb.
- [9] agus or 's with a noun and a qualifying phrase means the same as an English subordinate clause; whether the English clause would be introduced by "when" or "because" or ... has to be inferred from context; the dialect in Ireland, Scotland, and N. England use this same construction, but it isn't used in standard English.
- [10] Where men wear kilts, women take an interest in their legs; if people from trousered cultures find the simile in these two lines strange, they should just think about the things women's legs get compared to in English poetry.
- [11] literally: a river that runs purely clean.
- [12] "what there are of people" - this construction is quite common where English would use "all"
- [13] "on the world". apart from the fairies (and perhaps the miners) there aren't any people "in" the world in Gaelic.
- [14] "Ach" doesn't really mean "but" here, it's just noise.
- [15] "I am in hope and in expectation"
the two occurrences of "an" here are both contractions of "ann an" (it would be more correct in terms of the history of the language to say that "ann an" is a doubling of "an", but we're interested in the modern language not in early common Gaelic [aka old Irish]).

[16] literally "in which". the day in which = th

Vocabulary

'sam [sam] in which (relative prepositional pronoun: anns + am)

ach [ax] but

aibhne [ain'e] of a river (genitive singular of abhainn, river)

aig [eg'] at

air [er'] on

ann [auN] in it (prepositional pronoun).

's ann: it is; the copula (is) is used with ann to allow an adverb to be brought forwards in the sentence for emphasis.

bheil [vel'] am, is, are; present dependent of bi (to be)

bheo\ [v'o:] or [veo:] lenited form of beo\, life

bhios [vis] will be (future relative of bi)

bhithinn [vi:jinn] I would be (incomplete independent of bi)

(note: I use [j] for a consonantal i-glide)

bho\idheach [vo:jach] beautiful; feminine of bo\idheach

bo\idheach [bo:jach] beautiful

bhradan [vrat@n] salmon (lenited bradan)

bu\ithnean [bu:n'@n] shops. plural of bu\th (also bu\ithean, bu\than)

chaidh [xai] went (past independent of rach)

chaileig [xalag'] young girl (dative of caileag)

chalpa [xalpa] calf (leg below knee, not young cow). (lenited calpa)
 cheil [xel'] hide, conceal (future dependent of ceil)
 ceo\ [k'o:] mist
 cheo\l [x'eo:l] music (ceo\l lenited)
 chinn [xiN'] of a head (gen sing of ceann, head)
 choill [x@L'] wood, grove, forest. (dative sing.) (usually choille)
 co\mhladh [ko: la], [ko:la%] together. [%] at end only if followed by
 a word beginning with a vowel, r, or l.
 sometimes written co\mhla.
 you will see co\ladh but that's definitely wrong.
 crann [krauN] mast, tree, beam; plough
 cuachach [ku@xax] curly, wavey. also plaited, folded, kilted
 cuimir [kem@r'] well-proportioned; neat
 chuir [xuir'] put (past independent of cuir)
 chu\l [xu:l] back; hair of head. (cu\l lenited)
 dhealta [jelt@] of dew (genetive singular of dealt)
 di\leas [d'i:l'es] faithful
 direach [d'ir'ox] straight
 diu\lnach [d'u:lnax] handsome man (usually diu\lannach [d'uluNax])
 do\chas [do:x@s] hope, expectation
 dhomh-sa [%o: s@] to me ("emphatic" form) (do + mi-se)
 do'n [don] to the
 dhreach [%rax] colour; beauty; form, figure, shape.
 dualach [du@lax] bushy, luxuriant
 du\il [du:l'] desire, hope, expectation
 dhuit [%uxt'] to you (do + tu)
 eile [eil@] other, another
 falt [falt] locks, hair
 fear [fer], [far] man; one (masculine)
 fearail [fer@l'] manly
 fi\dhle [fi:l'e] of a violin, fiddle (gen sing of fidheall)
 fi\or [fi:r] pure, true. used as intensifying prefix
 fi\or-ghlan [fi:r %lan] truly clean, pure (fi\or + glan)
 fiu\ran [f'u:ran] handsome young man; sapling
 gallan [gaLan] branch, stalk
 gaol [g@:l] love
 gleus [gle:s] order, readiness, trim, preparedness
 gho\raich [%o:rix'] foolish, inexperienced
 gra\dh [gra:%] love (noun)
 ghradhaich [%ra:%ix'] love (verb) (future dependent of gra\dhaich)
 grinn' [griN'] comparative of grinn. as grinne: most fine
 ghruaidh [%ruaj] cheek
 gur [gur] is, am, are (gu'n + present dependent of is)
 gura [gura] emphatic sort of gur
 horo trala
 iad [at] they
 inntinn [i:Nt'iN'] thoughts, spirits
 lo\n-duibh [lo:n tajv], [lo:n duj] of a black bird (g.s. of lo\n-dubh)
 luaidh [luaj] love (person)

maidne [mat'n'e] of morning (g.s. of maduinn)
 maiseach [mas'ox] fair, beautiful, graceful
 mar as
 measg [misk] among (contraction of am measg)
 miar [mi:ar] finger (written meur usually)
 nuair [nuer'] when
 o'igfhear [o:g'er] young man
 peann [p'auN] pen
 phearsa [f'ars@] figure, person
 ro'san [ro:s@n] roses
 ruith [Ri:], [R@i:] run
 ru'n [Ru:n] affection, love
 sgi'th [ski:] tired
 sgri'obhas [skri:v@s] will write (future relative of sgriobh)
 sinn [s'iN'] we
 shluagh [lua%] people (sluagh)
 smalan [smalan] gloom, melancholy
 thalamh [halu] land
 teudan [t'et@n] strings, harps, musical instruments
 tig [t'ik] come
 thogadh [hok@%] would raise (incomplete independent of tog)
 thug [huk] gave, took. past independent of thoir
 tug [tuk] gave, took. past dependent of thoir
 uigh [uj] interest, attention

This song is by John McLean of Balemartin (Iain Mac Neaill) and was written about 1880. That's the same John MacLean who wrote Oran Manitoba and and Breacan Mairi Uisdean (the Skye version by Mary MacPherson was published as "a new setting" of MacLean's song, something most Skyemen seem to have forgotten) which you can find somewhere in the Gaelic-L log files. But not to be confused with the other John MacLean from Tiree (Iain Mac Laine, bard thighearna Colla) who wrote about Canada, or the later Tiree John MacLean (Iain Mac Lachainn) who wrote "fo smuarean air moch di Luaine". It's quite surprising that a tiny place like Tiree managed to produce three good poets with the same name in the space of 80 years. (The rumour that every male inhabitant of Tiree is called John MacLean is unfounded.)CC
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